1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

have drawn the line to include in the 1953 rural population the communities below a certain size. 162

Table 4. Rural and Urban Population in Central-South China (1948) */

	Rural	Urban
Honan Province	88.42	11.58
Hunan Province	74.31	25.69
Hupeh Province	90.80	9.20
Kiangsi Province	80.02	19.98
Kwangsi Province	79.62	20.38
Kwangtung Province	71.47	28.53
Regional Average	80.74	19.26

*/ Based on Chung-hua Min-kuo T'ung-chi T'i-yao [Statistical Abstract of the Republic of China], Taipei, Executive Yüan, Directorate-General of Budgets, Accounts and Statistics, 1955, p. 34.

The same Communist sources disclosed that, as of June 1953, the young and young-adult groups constitute an overwhelming majority of the total population. A 15.6 per cent figure is assigned to the 1-4 years age group and 11 per cent to the 5-9 years age group. Within the age bracket 18-79, the figure is approximately 58.9 per cent. No statistical data are available to indicate the exact age-group composition of the Central-South China population.

Based on 1953 census information, the national average birth rate is 3.7 per cent per year and the death rate is 1.7 per cent, a natural rate of increase of two per cent per year, which would be considered a high rate in any nation in the world. The Communists tend 161 163

to attribute the significant increase in population during recent years to the improvement in medical service and sanitation measures and betterment of economic conditions generally. As specific evidence the Peking regime points to such places as the village group of Shen-chuang hsiang, Lu-shan hsien, in Honan Province. The information on population of this locality shown in Table 5 was obtained from the 1953 census: */

Table 5. Population of Shen-chuang Hsiang

Children		Sex Ratio		
Age	Number	Age	Male	Female
1	93	1	42	51
2	80	3	32	33
3	65	4	22	20
4	42	5-59	1,273	1,041

*/ Chu Wei, "What the Population Figures of a Hsiang Tell," People's China, June 16, 1954, pp. 16-18.

Lacking additional details, the figures in Table 5 may be open to any of the following interpretations: (1) The infant mortality in this locality through the past four years has been startlingly high. (2) Infant girls die more frequently than infant boys. (3) The birth rate has increased. (4) Social conditions have improved in general, including the abolition of such practices as infanticide, of which infant girls used to be common victims. The Communists do not hesitate, of course, to conclude that the two latter possibilities are actual fact, and there is no way to prove or disprove their claim since the mortality rate and other relevant information on the population of Shen-chuang has not been released.